

EFFINGHAM
DAILY NEWS

Letter to the Editor: Border wall won't fix drug problem

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David Mahon's column in the EDN last week makes an important point that the opioid crisis is a public safety and a public health problem. ("Border security key to stopping drug epidemic in Effingham County," Friday, Aug. 30, 2019.)

I agree that we need to fund technology, patrol agents and our own local law enforcement, but I do not agree that a border wall is a useful component of this effort to block drug importation.

Sheriff Mahon cites an example at the start of his column. Two hundred and fifty-four pounds of fentanyl was stopped at the border-at a legal port of entry. According to Customs and Border Protection, 88% of cocaine, 90% of heroin, 87% of meth, and 80% of fentanyl comes through a legal port of entry.

John Kelly, Mr. Trump's former chief of staff, testified to congress to this point. The Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank funded by Charles Koch, also argues that the border wall would not work.

Let's put this funding to good use: Border patrol, technology, local law enforcement and public health to identify and alter the reasons citizens use these illicit drugs. But let's not kid ourselves that a wall will fix this problem.